



The Tourism Sector Government Crisis Communication at the Beginning of the Covid-19 Pandemic: Strategies for Utilizing Instagram Social Media

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Abstract

This study aims to find out how the strategy used by the Government of Indonesia, in this case the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy (MoTCE), in utilizing Instagram social media as a means of communication for the tourism sector crisis in the early days of the Covid-19 pandemic in March 2020. This study uses a qualitative descriptive content analysis to describe the strategies used by MoTCE in using Instagram account @kemenparekraf.ri, by first mapping all posts for one month for later analysis. This study also uses the concept of crisis response strategies representing the actual responses that organizations use to overcome crises where crisis response strategies involve words (verbal aspects) and actions (nonverbal aspects) that are directed by organizations towards crises (Allen & Caillouet, 1994 and Benoit, 1995 in Coombs, 2015). The validity of the data in the study was carried out by analyzing data in the form of data reduction, data presentation and drawing conclusions. The result of the research is that various topics/themes are raised in response to various events related to Covid-19, the use of certain hashtags, policies that have been taken and campaigns that have been carried out consistently conveyed to the public regarding Covid-19, as well as a timeline of events that can be concluded as important efforts that have been carried out by MoTCE at the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Keywords: *Covid-19; Crisis Communication; Instagram; Response Strategy*

Introduction

The Covid-19 pandemic in Indonesia, which was first confirmed to have occurred in March 2020, actually had a significant impact on the tourism sector. The arrival of foreign tourists which decreased very drastically by 75.03% compared to 2019 and the limited movement of domestic tourists resulted in a decline in the country's foreign exchange and directly affected the lives of Indonesian people who depended on the tourism sector. Data from BPS RI processed by MoTCE (2021), the realization of a decline in foreign tourist arrivals occurred starting in February 2020 which was recorded at 30.55% from the previous year's 1,243,996 people to 863,960 people. In March 2020 the decline was even sharper where there were only 470,970 foreign tourists compared to March 2019 of 1,311,911 people or a decrease of 64.10%. In total, in the January-December 2020 period, the decline in foreign tourists counted from 16,106,954 to only 4,022,505 foreign tourists.

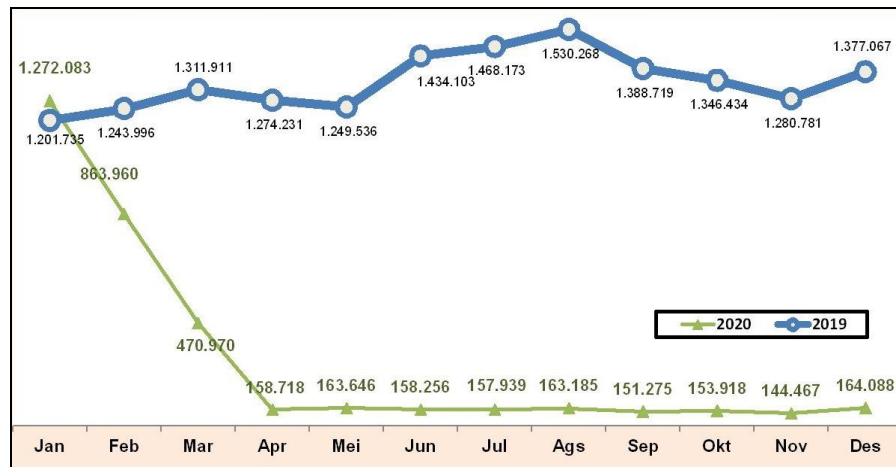


Figure 1. Indonesia Foreign Tourists Counted on 2020

The presence of the government, in this case the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy (MoTCE), as the policy holder for the tourism sector as well as an extension of the President as head of state, is important, especially in dealing with the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. MoTCE as one of the state institutions based on the Presidential Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 69 of 2019 tasked with carrying out government affairs in the tourism and creative economy sectors is one of the organizations that has experienced several crises related to the tourism crisis, related to natural disasters that have an impact on destinations and at the time of the visit. the Covid-19 pandemic, which made tourism in Indonesia fall. MoTCE's initial steps and efforts to deal with the crisis really need to be disseminated to the general public, including through social media such as Instagram. The crisis is important to be responded for it is closely related to the affected stakeholders and has an interest both directly and indirectly in the reputation of the organization. In relation to the channel for delivering these steps and efforts, the representation of MoTCE on Instagram social media, which is currently one of the largest social media, becomes very crucial, especially in the Covid-19 pandemic situation where according to Nabity-Grover et al., (2020) the public are required to practice social distancing and lockdowns that make them increasingly turn to social media for support, entertainment and stay connected.

This study aims to analyze how the use of Instagram social media carried out by MoTCE at the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic occurred, both regarding the delivery of policy programs and various campaigns carried out by MoTCE by utilizing Instagram media using account @kemenparekraf.ri. It is expected that this can be done with the right strategy so that the information conveyed received quickly, efficiently, and according to its purpose. This research is expected to provide a clear picture of how the crisis communication strategy is carried out, especially with regard to reducing the impact and protecting the reputation of the organization.

Literature Review

The use of information channels by organizations during a pandemic, especially through social media, according to Nabity-Grover et al., (2020) is important because the COVID-19 pandemic conditions require people to practice social distancing and lock down, and make them increasingly turn to social media for support, entertainment and staying connected. In addition, social media has a significant role in the function of sharing news as well as personal experiences and points of view with each other in real time and globally (Islam et al., 2020). The breadth of activities that are possible through social media have resulted in changes in our society, where Hays (2013) argues that social media is changing the way people consume and contribute to the creation of information, where nowadays technology allows

individuals to easily contribute their thoughts, opinions, and their creations. This is what makes organizations, including government institutions, required to provide information channels through social media in order to stay connected with their stakeholders.

Regarding the use of social media for crisis communication, Coombs (2015) stated that when a crisis occurs or there is a risk of crisis, people need information such as how to protect themselves through social media, so it is considered an evolutionary stimulus because users (not organizations) or traditional news media) can control the creation and distribution of information or in other words now users are bypassing the "traditional information gatekeepers". In utilizing social media in crisis communication, organizations should pay attention to the characteristics possessed by social media. Voit (in Coombs, 2015) describes five general characteristics of social media, namely: (1) participation: anyone can create and provide feedback about a content; (2) openness: most social media allow people to post content and provide feedback; (3) conversation: facilitate two-way interaction; (4) community: groups with similar interests can form quickly; and (5) connectedness: there is a lot of use of links to other content.

One of the social media that can be used as a channel to convey crisis information is Instagram, where Niknam et al., (2020), found that Instagram users used various strategies in creating content about the public health crisis during the Covid-19 pandemic, and generated as many as 23 themes on their content posts which include epidemiology and statistics, training and care, general prevention guidelines, hygiene, healthy diet and lifestyle, patients, diagnosis and treatment, personal protective equipment, traditional medicine, psychology, children, cultural aspects, socio-cultural impact, religion, misinformation and wrong behavior, animals, satire, health care system condition, politics, quarantine, economic impact, and world news. Such information is certainly very much needed with credible sources, which can be provided by interested organizations.

Considerations in selecting data sources in the form of postings on social media accounts because according to data from We Are Social & Hootsuite (2021), in Indonesia currently internet users cover 73.7% of the population (202 million people) with 61.8% active social media users of the population (170 million people). Meanwhile, the average time spent accessing social media in a day is 3 hours 14 minutes, compared to the time spent accessing online media which is 1 hour 38 minutes. This shows that currently in Indonesia the use of social media is a common activity, compared to reading online news so that the data source used is posting on social media accounts. There are two reasons for choosing the use of social media Instagram as a data source compared to Facebook and Twitter. First, according to We Are Social & Hootsuite (2021) recorded that Instagram is used by more users in Indonesia in one month with a percentage of 86.6% compared to Facebook (85.5%) and Twitter (63.6%) so that users more of this reflects the need for information to be shared through the social media platform Instagram. Second, if it sorted from the number of followers/likes, the Kemenparekraf RI Instagram account has the highest number compared to the other two social media, with the following details:

Table 1 MoTCE Account on Social Media

Platform	Account	URL	Followers/Likes
Instagram	@kemenparekraf.ri	https://www.instagram.com/kemenparekraf.ri	831.969
Twitter	@Kemenparekraf	https://twitter.com/kemenparekraf	201.592
Facebook	@ParekrafRI	https://web.facebook.com/ParekrafRI	181.000

Findings on November, 2021

Coombs (2007) developed a theory of situational crisis communication to enhance the topic dominated by case studies and to provide a framework for understanding how to protect an organization's reputation during a crisis. Coombs (2007) identified several main objectives for this theory, first to describe how the components of a crisis affect the attributions made by various stakeholders; Second, offer post-crisis communication recommendations based on how people are likely to respond to crises; Fourth, identify factors related to the attributions people make about the crisis, the emotions of anger, and the accompanying sympathy; Fifth, propose that attributions and emotions influence behavioral intentions. Crisis response strategies represent the actual responses that organizations use to overcome crises where crisis response strategies involve words (verbal aspects) and actions (nonverbal aspects) that the organization directs toward the crisis (Allen & Caillouet, 1994 and Benoit, 1995 in Coombs, 1995). 2015). Coombs (2015) adds that the situational crisis communication theory regulates crisis response strategies by determining whether the purpose of the strategy is to change the perception of the crisis or the organization in crisis.

Methodology

A descriptive qualitative approach is used with the method of descriptive qualitative content analysis, which according to Rakhmat & Ibrahim (2017), content analysis is a technique used to obtain information from the content of communication that is conveyed in the form of symbols and can be applied to analyze all forms of communication, such as newspapers, books, poetry, songs, folklore, paintings, speeches, letters, regulations, laws, music, theater, and so on. Eriyanto (2011) describes descriptive content analysis intended to describe a particular message or text in detail, which is solely for description (describes aspects and characteristics of a message). The analysis used in this study uses the identification of themes with the approach of Holsti (in Eriyanto, 2011), the thematic unit to see the classification of posts that appear on the Instagram account @kemenparekraf.ri. The research analysis unit is in the form of content on the Instagram account @kemenparekraf.ri with a timeline referring to the phases in tourism crisis management (PATA, 2004) that is reduction, readiness, and response which the researchers grouped into two phases, namely the reduction and readiness phases on December 31, 2019 – March 1, 2020 (when the Covid-19 virus was officially reported to WHO up to D-1 before the Covid-19 virus appeared in Indonesia) and the response phase was on March 2, 2020 – May 29, 2020 (when the Covid-19 virus appeared in Indonesia until the following day) Finally, the emergency status for handling the Corona virus (Covid-19) was determined by BNPB).

Result and Discussion

There are a total of 55 Instagram posts on the @kemenparekraf.ri account from March 3 to April 3, 2021 with free themes. Of this number, restrictions were made in the form of sorting posts whose content was not related to Covid-19, so there were 35 posts for analysis.

General Description

Total words in 35 posts amounted to 2762 words, with an average per post of 79 words. The post with the highest number of words is about the Cloth Mask Movement (<https://www.instagram.com/p/Bd295eB-ft>). Total likes on 35 posts is 70,265 likes with an average per post of 2702 likes.

The highest number of likes is regarding the urge of the President of the Republic of Indonesia, Joko Widodo regarding the development of the Covid-19 virus in Indonesia (https://www.instagram.com/p/B9wF_K7hR6y/), which is 8398 likes. The total number of comments on 35 posts is 1202 comments with an average comment per post of 34 comments. The post with the highest number of comments is the same as the post with the highest number of likes, which recorded 218 comments.

Hashtag

In writing articles published on their Instagram account, MoTCE uses various hashtags as a means to share similarities and group themes with other Instagram users.

Table 2 Hashtag Uses on Instagram @kemenparekraf.ri

Hashtag			
#BersamaJagaIndonesia #BERSAMALAWANCOVI D19 #bersatulawancorona #BersatuLawanCovid19 #COVID19 #COVID19Indonesia #DiIndonesiaAja #dirumahaja #DiRumahDuluAja	#ekonomikreatif #GerakanMaskerKain #HariPerawatNasional #IndonesiaKreatif #JagaDiri #jagajarak #JagaJarakAman #JagaKeluarga #jagakesehatan	#KaryaAnakNegeri #KerjaDariRumah #lawancovid19 #melawancovid19 #pendaftaranterbuka #PhysicalDistancing #socialdistancing #tahanbepergian #tenanganwaspada	#terusberkarya #tetapwaspada #tipswfh #TundaMudikDulu #updatecoronavirus #waspadaviruscorona #wfh #WonderfulIndonesia #WorkFromHome

There are 36 hashtags used in 35 posts, with the 4 most frequently used hashtags: #COVID19, #waspadaviruscorona, #jagajarak, and #BersamaJagaIndonesia. The use of hashtags outside the main post is not so much, around 2-4 hashtags combined with the use of hashtags in the main post.

Policy

MoTCE carries out various policies and activities in response to the Covid-19 pandemic crisis. These various steps are socialized through Instagram media, which after the analysis is divided into two parts, they are policies and activities carried out by MoTCE internally and from external parties such as other ministries.

A. Internal Policy:

1. The tourism sector stimulus policy to attract foreign tourists (tourists) after the Covid-19 pandemic ends.
2. Handling foreign tourists who enter Indonesian destinations when the Covid-19 spread period begins.
3. Increasing the quality of tourism destinations through efforts to preserve the environment, health and hygiene, and security.
4. Postponing the holding of meetings, incentives, conventions, and exhibitions for tourism and the creative economy until the Covid-19 pandemic passes.
5. Preparing recovery plans for the affected tourism and creative economy sectors so that they can provide direct benefits to the community and the national economy.
6. Disinfecting office buildings today, so all officials and employees must work at home.
7. WFH guidelines for all State Civil Apparatus/MoTCE employees to prevent the spread of Covid-19 in the country.
8. Spraying disinfectants in all offices of the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy/Tourism and Creative Economy Agency.
9. Checking the body temperature of employees and the public who visit the office, providing hand sanitizers in various corners of the room, and enforcing the work from home (WFH) policy as a form of social distancing.

10. Terminating of MoTCE Information and Public Complaint Services through face-to-face meetings where the public can still submit complaints to MoTCE through the Halo Wonderful information service portal, email info@kemenparekraf.go.id, or contact center related to COVID-19 0811 895 6767.
11. Proposing various economic stimuli in order to ease the burden on tourism and creative economy business actors with the aim of reducing the potential for layoffs of employees in the sector.
12. Supporting accommodation (hotel) and transportation facilities to the Task Force for the Acceleration of Handling Covid-19 and medical staff at the RSCM, RSPAD, Sulianti Saroso Hospital and Friendship Hospital who are collaborating with Accor Group, Swiss-Belhotel and Reddoorz to provide a resting place as well as with Bluebird, Panorama, Antavaya, and White Horse Group to provide transportation facilities.
13. Creating The Cloth Mask Movement to invite parties who have brands/brands to help make cloth masks that will be distributed to other friends who are healthy and cannot work from home in order to address the scarcity and expensive price of medical masks.
14. Signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with PT. Smart Digital Nusantara (CAKAP), which is a startup in the field of digital application-based education, through the Cakap application, tourism industry players can learn and improve their English skills online during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Meanwhile, there are 5 policies from other Ministries/Institutions that are socialized through the MoTCE Instagram account :

1. Preparing 132 infection referral hospitals from 34 provinces, based on the Decree of the Minister of Health of the Republic of Indonesia number HK.01.07/MENKES/169/2020 concerning the Designation of Referral Hospitals for the Management of Certain Emerging Infectious Diseases.
2. Providing the emergency response services that have been integrated through PSC 119 with ext 9 to respond more quickly to community reports about Covid-19.
3. A policy that allows State Civil Apparatus (ASN) to be able to work from home (work from home), by establishing a Circular on Adjusting the ASN Work System in Efforts to Prevent the Spread of Covid-19 in Government Agencies where the adjustment of the work system takes effect from March 16 2020 to March 31, 2020.
4. New rules regarding bank credit relief and leasing loans.
5. Updating regulations regarding the prohibition of foreigners who will enter Indonesian territory and also residence permits for foreigners who are currently in Indonesia through Permenkumham number 11 of 2020.

Campaign

During one month there were fourteen campaigns related to Covid-19 that appeared in 35 posts, which are depicted in the table below:

Table 3 Campaign Uses on Instagram@kemenparekraf.ri

No	Campaign	Frequency
1	Maintain Health and Environment	6
2	Together Protect Indonesia	5
3	Health Information Update	4
4	Just At Home	4
5	Keep Your Distance - Social Distancing - Physical Distancing	3
6	Travel in Indonesia Only	2
7	Do Not Panic	2
8	Work from Home	2
9	Self Isolation	1
10	Cloth Mask Movement	1
11	Appreciate the Hard Work of All Parties	1
12	Postpone Homecoming First	1
13	Take Advantage of the Technology of the Country's Children Creation	1
14	Washing Hands	1
TOTAL		34

These campaigns are supported by narratives in the form of text, photos, videos, hashtags, and related activities. Interestingly, in the one month period the posts analyzed were almost all posts (97.14%) on MoTCE accounts using certain campaigns. The campaign carried out was quite responsive in raising various policies and strategic issues around Covid-19, both related to Indonesian tourism or regarding the pandemic in general.

Figure and Institution

The purpose of the figures and institutions here is a post that raises the opinion of a figure or mentions one or more other institutions outside the MoTCE. By appointing a widely known figure, the level of credibility and trust from the community will ultimately be able to cause influence in accordance with the expected goals.

There were 12 parties named in 35 MoTCE Instagram posts from March 3 to March 3rd. April 3, 2020, which we divided into three parts, namely Government consisting of the President and Ministries/Institutions, external institutions such as WHO and industry, and medical/health personnel.

Specifically, the discussion of the figures and institutions appointed is in the table below:

Table 4 The Discussion of the Figures and Institutions Uses on Instagram @kemenparekraf.ri

Figure/Institution	Topic
Government	
Internal	
The Minister of Tourism and Creative Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The implementation of the tourism sector stimulus policy to attract foreign tourists (tourists) will only be carried out when the Covid-19 outbreak subsides and the atmosphere is conducive again and prioritizes handling and anticipation so that the transmission of the Covid-19 virus does not spread further. - Focus on programs for handling foreign tourists entering Indonesian destinations at the start of the spread of the Corona virus, as well as increasing the quality of tourism destinations through efforts to preserve the environment, health and hygiene, and security. - An urge for tourists traveling in Indonesia to pay attention to health aspects such as maintaining cleanliness, washing hands, increasing immunity, and paying attention for the urge from the local government. - Berharap agar stakeholder pariwisata dan ekonomi kreatif dapat bersama-sama mengambil langkah antisipatif terkait Covid-19 di tanah air salah satunya dengan menunda penyelenggaraan Pertemuan, Insentif, Konvensi, dan Pameran pariwisata maupun ekraf hingga pandemi Covid-19 berlalu. - Inviting tourism and creative economy actors to unite and work hand in hand by being actively involved in helping the government socialize the Covid-19 emergency policy to the public. - Collaborating with various parties in facilitating rest and transportation for the task force and medical personnel to rest and ensuring the SOP.
The Vice Minister of Tourism and Creative Economy	Ensure the readiness of transportation facilities, hotel facilities that will be a place for task forces and medical personnel to rest and the SOP.
External	
The President of Indonesia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensuring that the identification and surveillance process has been carried out for all people who had contact with two positive Corona Virus patients. - Remind the public to prevent transmission of the Corona Virus by washing their hands frequently and not touching their faces before washing their hands. - Urge for people to do activities at home as an effort to prevent the spread of the corona virus (Covid-19) in the country - Emphasizing that people do not panic, work together and help each other in dealing with Covid-19. - Provide direction, one of which is to the Ministry of State Apparatus Empowerment and Bureaucratic Reform to formulate policies that allow State Civil Apparatus (ASN) to be able to work from home.
The Minister of Health – The Ministry of Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Preparing 132 infection referral hospitals from 34 provinces. The determination of the hospital was based on the Decree of the Minister of Health of the Republic of Indonesia number HK.01.07/MENKES/169/2020 concerning the Designation of a Referral Hospital for the Management of Certain Emerging Infectious Diseases.. - Providing emergency response services that have been integrated through PSC 119 with ext 9. - Advising people who experience symptoms of #covid19 to self-isolate for at least 14 days.

The Minister of Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform – The Ministry of Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform	Establishing a Circular regarding Adjustment of the ASN Work System in Efforts to Prevent the Spread of COVID-19 in Government Agencies. The work system adjustment takes effect from March 16, 2020 to March 31, 2020.
Financial Services Authority (OJK)	For creditors who have been economically affected by the Covid-19 outbreak, OJK Indonesia has issued new regulations regarding bank credit and leasing loans.
Covid-19 Handling Task Force Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Following the direction of the government and the Task Force for the Acceleration of Handling COVID-19 in the face of this pandemic. - Support for accommodation facilities (hotels) and transportation to the Task Force for the Acceleration of Handling Covid-19 of the National Disaster Management Agency. - MoTCE ensures the readiness of transportation facilities and hotel facilities that will be a place for task forces and medical personnel to rest along with their SOPs.
Other Figures/Institutions	
Industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cooperation between MoTCE with Accor Group, Swiss-Belhotel and Reddoorz to provide a resting place and with Bluebird, Panorama, Antavaya, and White Horse Group to provide transportation facilities. - Conducting training and information to hotel staff related to SOPs from the Indonesian Ministry of Health regarding the prevention of COVID-19 transmission for the sake of mutual comfort and safety. - The purpose of the Cloth Mask Movement, among others, is to help activate the fashion sector Small and Medium-sized Enterprises affected by the Covid-19 outbreak so that they can survive during the COVID-19 emergency. - The signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between MoTCE and PT. Smart Digital Nusantara (CAKAP) which is a startup in the field of digital application-based education.
WHO	WHO recommends replacing the term social distancing with physical distancing and stressing that keeping a distance does not mean limiting social interactions.
Medical Personel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rest and transportation facilities for medical personnel who are now at the forefront of handling the Covid-19 outbreak. - Holding a Cloth Mask Movement to meet the mask needs of patients and medical staff. - An invitation to appreciate the hard work of medical personnel, media, volunteers, daily workers, and all of them who have been working hand in hand against Covid-19.

Timeline

In general, we can see on the timeline that various policies and campaigns are displayed on MoTCE's Instagram account posts. It's just that there are a few days where there are absolutely no posts featuring these three important topics. The complete timeline for postings containing policy, campaign, and figure/institution topics can be seen in the table below:

Table 5 Timeline on Instagram @kemenparekraf.ri

Topic	Date															
	March															
	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Policy																
Campaign																
Figure/Institution																

Topic	Date															
	March													April		
	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	1	2	3
Policy																
Campaign																
Figure/Institution																

Conclusion

This research shows that MoTCE has implemented various policy programs and activities in response to the Covid-19 pandemic crisis which is communicated and disseminated through social media which we can see from various posts on its Instagram account. The use of appropriate hashtags for each post; There are various campaigns around Covid-19 prevention, namely: maintain health and environment together protect Indonesia, health information update, just at home, keep your distance/social distancing/physical distancing, travel in Indonesia only, don't panic, work from home, self isolation, cloth mask movement, appreciate the hard work of all parties, postpone homecoming first, take advantage of the technology of the country's children creation, and campaign about washing hands; there is the use of figures in conveying the MoTCE program and presenting connectedness with other parties as collaboration so that the public can gain trust, validity and complete information provided on MoTCE's Instagram account posts. Unfortunately, in the timeline of Instagram posts in the one month period that is analyzed in the research, we can see that there are several days where there are no posts concerning policies, campaigns, and figures/institutions. We should appreciate the crisis communication efforts carried out by MoTCE in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic that has made all lines of life worse, which we believe aims to reduce the impact it causes, at least through the various information displayed.

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